



PETER M. ROONEY

#### A MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

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As we move into the 21st century, there are three areas of focus in the forefront of the environmental challenges we face along the California-Baja California Border: clean water, pollution prevention, and sustainable development. These areas gained notoriety with the passage of North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and its environmental side-agreements which identified issues of importance and priority areas. This report is intended to serve the reader as a compendium of resources, and aims at clarifying the roles, functions and programs of the many institutions and organizations involved in promoting and funding environmental infrastructure projects along the US-Mexico border region.

This second edition of the California-Baja California Environmental Infrastructure Needs Assessment report marks the continuation of a cooperative effort between Cal/EPA and its Baja California counterparts in addressing our common environment needs. I trust the information in this report will dispel some of the common myths and sheds light on misconceptions regarding the California-Baja California border. It may be common place to hear that the NAFTA has brought environmental demise to the border region and has made it a wasteland or that environmental laws are nonexistent in Mexico. While these misconceptions are at times sensationalized by the media, it is also necessary to point out the positive strides California and Baja California have taken to confront and resolve environmental challenges along their shared border. In reality, California has set precedent in many areas relating to border environmental issues. State-to-state collaboration and cooperation at an environmental policy maker's level is at an all time high between California and Baja California and more recently with Baja California Sur. Although, Baja California Sur's Environmental Infrastructure Projects are not included in this report, mention of this State is essential since it is a California Border Environmental Cooperation Committee member. It is anticipated that the next edition of this report will include environmental infrastructure from all three Californias.

While we may not be able to conquer all environmental challenges, we will master many. California will continue to seek out environmental infrastructure projects of a sound nature that benefit the Border region as a whole. I am optimistic that through cooperation, trust, dedication and mutual respect, differences and similarities between both states will amalgamate enabling us to defy and resolve environmental challenges along the border region.

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Peter M. Rooney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Peter" being more prominent.

**Peter M. Rooney**  
*Secretary for Environmental Protection*